**KEEPING THE TEACHER INFORMED** 

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PEARSON

# No one left behind

Every time a new Riforma Scolastica comes out, everybody in the school world tries to figure out how it will be different from the previous one and whether it will be an improvement or not. By 'everybody in the school world' I mean not only teachers and headmasters, but also students (even Primary school children are to some extent aware of changes in their school life) families and, of course, us, the school editors.

What we have always tried to do, and are still doing today, is to understand and interpret in a practical way the new keywords and features that each Riforma Scolastica brings forward and to share with our readers our ideas and suggestions for the best ways to implement them in their teaching situations.

One of the keywords of the current new Riforma Scolastica is inclusion and this is the main theme of this issue of Pearson Primary Times. But what does 'inclusion' really mean?

The LONGMAN Dictionary of Contemporary English gives us a definition of inclusion as 'the act of including someone or something in a larger group or set'. This definition goes a long way to help us understand what the Riforma Scolastica means. All students are part of a group, and by saying 'all' we mean every single one of them: students with Specific Learning Difficulties (*DSA – Disturbi Specifici dell'Apprendimento*), students with special needs, students who come from foreign countries and only have problems with L1, all kinds of students. In this issue of Pearson Primary Times we give teachers tips and suggestions on how to handle this important topic.

We are also offering our readers a few pages with both theoretical and practical input on testing after the summer holidays, as we believe it is important to start a new school year from the very point where the children really are, in order to include them all (inclusion, again!) in the new year's learning process.

Teachers will also find two pages of the always useful hands-on activities called Kids' Corner, which teachers can use both for teaching/revising lexis linked to the season and its festivities and for filling those last five/ten minutes at the end of a lesson when children are tired and need to do something practical.

Last but not least, there is our usual Class Project, which will, naturally, also be about inclusion. Read and enjoy!

*Giulia Abbiati* Pearson Italia Primary ELT



## PEARSON

# Always learning means ALWAYS LEARNING

PrimaryTimes

We of course know what 'always learning' means, but some of the time we tend to forget that not all students have the same learning style, the same skills and competences, the same background and the same starting points. It is therefore very important to keep in mind that finding teaching strategies to really involve all the students in a class does not mean finding one strategy, but finding many: personalised learning paths will then truly signify 'always learning'.

A student who suffers from dvslexia or dysgraphics is nothing like a student with special needs, nor is he or she like a foreign student (we like to call them new citizens) who might have a perfect knowledge of English or of another language (maybe even more than one!) but might find it hard to cope Italian. Therefore, with

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teachers need to be very careful when creating learning paths. They must not put 'pupils with learning difficulties' in one category as if they were all the same and with identical needs and they must not present one learning path for them all.

### Inclusion and Personalization: our key words

Each student has different learning styles. For this reason we believe that all children (whether they have



Giulia Abbiati and Anna Fresco

SLD, are new citizens, have special needs or have none of the above characteristics) must always have two very clear features to their learning: inclusion and personalization.

**Inclusion** means that the teacher should find a way to integrate the children with difficulties in their class by not only giving them tasks that differ from those given to their peers but by also offering activities

> that the class as a whole is capable of doing. New technologies can be very helpful in this perspective. They are ideal for children with SLD, because these children are usually more skilled than their peers in using digital materials. Digital and interactive materials can also be of help with new citizens, as they are more visual

and of immediate comprehension than the traditional paper book. New technologies can be useful for students with special needs because they can provide the opportunity for the whole class to work together, for example, on the same video or DVD. In this way, all the children share the same experience.

**Personalization** is a smaller category and, in some ways, 'lives' inside inclusion. Teachers have to include all the children, and they also have to personalize their learning, in order to avoid generalizations. The manner in which a foreign language is taught, for instance, cannot be the same with a dyslexic or dysgraphic child or with a new citizen or with a child with special needs. Teachers must always know who they are facing and what the skills and limits of their pupils are and remember that each child is different.

A motto for us all that encompasses both ideas of inclusion and personalisation could be:

#### STUDENTS ARE COLLECTIVELY DIFFERENT!





### Dyslexia, let's get over it!

A dyslexic child is often a smart, brilliant kid who has some difficulties in reading because of a disorder which does not affect their intelligence: Albert Einstein was dyslexic and didn't learn to read before nine; Leonardo Da Vinci, Galileo Galilei, Walt Disney were dyslexic too. Does that mean they needed more help than the other children? Sure. Does that mean they were less clever than other children? Of course not! Dyslexia can usually be diagnosed before the end of the second primary school year. It is therefore important for teachers and families to be attentive and pick up on the symptoms. Then dyslexic children can easily be helped to fill the gap between themselves and their peers if school and family know what they face. It is very important that dyslexic children are diagnosed as soon as possible, thus preventing them from suffering psychological difficulties and avoiding that they become school 'drop outs'. A very useful website for teachers is Pearson iS at www.is.pearson.it, which offers different interesting topics with a focus on SLD and also a dedicated blog.

What has proved to be very useful with children who suffer from SLD is the Interactive White Board, or an individual use of an e-book at home. These learning tools contain features that are particularly useful in overcoming the problems that can be found when reading 'traditional' books. For example, they have:

- the possibility of enlarging parts of the page
- karaoke-style exercises, in which text and video are synchronized
- interactive exercises
- possibilities for self correction

Right now, what are you doing? Reading! Chances are you haven't consciously thought about it, now or for a very long time. So muhe of modern lfie reiles on bneig albe to undsertnad the written wrod that it's esay for us to take it for gnrated! :)





#### New citizens

It is clear that new citizens will not need the same kind of help given to students with SLD, as the kind of difficulties they might face are totally different.

Some of them might have problems with cultural aspects of their new world, but mostly the problems will be linked to L1 more than to L2. The biggest problem might be the writing system practised in their home country, where another alphabet might be used, such as Cyrillic or Arabic, or a totally different concept such as the ideographic language (China and Eastern Asian countries).

Therefore, if the teacher tries to speak English as much as possible in the classroom, avoids when possible speaking in Italian, exposes the children to authentic audio and video material, new citizens will come

closer to living the same experience (at last!) as their classmates, with no differences.

#### Special needs

As far as students with special needs are concerned, the topic becomes so huge that a single article would not be enough, as there are so many different levels of 'special needs' and so many different kinds of help that might need to be involved. What we can say here is that, once again, new technologies and Interactive White Boards can be usefully employed as they are very



flexible and can help the teacher to involve all the children in the class in the same activities, such as, watching pictures and videos, singing along, etc.

### Always learning, always teaching!

We at Pearson Italia are currently working on a number of different projects specifically designed for Primary teachers in order to help them face the different issues they find in their everyday experience with learning styles, SLD, special needs and new citizens.

Ask for our webinars about these hot issues. The first webinar was held in April 2013 entitled *Una scuola di tutti e di ciascuno* by Bianca Carrescia, and many others will follow!

Please contact <u>www.pearson.it/formazione-online</u> or info@pearson.it

Victor Hugo wrote:

'To learn to read is to light a fire: Every syllable that is spelled out is a spark.'

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# What's new out there on the web?

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Giulia Abbiati

### Keeping you updated on useful materials and websites you can find on the Internet!

We have been virtually flipping through the pages of the Pearson UK, Pearson USA and Pearson Australia websites and have found some different and interesting topics that we would like to share with you as reading suggestions. All Pearson websites are constantly being updated and loaded with contents and information, so... always keep an eye on them!

The **Pearson UK** website we would like to highlight is called **Enjoy Reading** and you can find it here: <u>uk.pearson.com/enjoy-reading.html</u>. The website is designed to give parents and teachers some advice on helping young children 'to enjoy and benefit from a love of reading'.

As we all know, reading is not only a wonderful past time, but it also opens children's minds and helps them learn more, memorise easily and have a personal point of view on life. Could there be anything better than helping kids enjoy it all, too?

The Pearson USA website we would like to draw attention to has an article on a completely different school life issue. It is an important and interesting report on an analysis of schools and education called **The Learning Curve**. You can find the report at thelearningcurve.pearson.com. This analysis, which is both quantitative and qualitative, 'seeks to further our understanding of what leads to successful education outcomes (...)'.

Last, but absolutely not least, the Pearson Australia team has been working on preventing bullying in primary schools after the National Anti-Bullying Forum was held in Canberra in July 2012. At <u>www.pearson.com.au/</u> <u>company/news-and-events/primary/prevent-bullying-</u> <u>news/</u> you can read about the forum and its results and find more information on this important subject. There is also a link to the Bully Project website: an American documentary on bullying that could be a starting point for further discussion and/or action. Enjoy!









Kids' Corner is a special section of **Pearson Primary Times** dedicated to very young learners.

# Kid rne

Giulia Abbiati

Autumn is here and Halloween is on its way, one of the most loved festivities by children all over the world. This Kids' Corner will give teachers the chance to teach and revise some Halloween lexis and/or to teach and revise some autumn lexis. All the activities which

follow have been thought about from an ecological point of view. We would like to teach our children to respect the world they live in and, therefore, to recycle materials in order to reduce the amount of waste. We hope you will appreciate and enjoy these ideas!

## Activity 1 Recycled can jack-o-lantern .....

What you need: • one empty can (for example, a sweetcorn or tomato can) for each child

- orange, white and black paint
- paintbrushes

#### What you do

- 1. Use the black paint to colour the entire can (this will be the background). Leave to dry.
- 2. Use the orange paint to paint a jack-o-lantern (or pumpkin) onto the can.
- 3. Use the white paint to draw the eyes and the black paint to finish the eyes and draw the mouth.
- 4. Use the can to keep your pencils in, or to go trick-ortreating, or to give some treats to your best friend!

### Activity 2 Glow-in-the-dark bottle ghost

#### What you need:

- one empty, white plastic bottle (better if a big one, like the washing powder/liquid ones for washing machines) for each child
- glow-in-the-dark paint (most paint shops sell it)
- black paint
- paintbrush
- goggle eyes
- glue

#### What you do

- 1. Paint the entire bottle with the glow-in-the-dark paint.
- 2. Use the black paint to draw a big, open mouth onto your ghost.
- 3. Glue on the goggle eyes above the mouth.
- 4. Turn off the lights and enjoy scaring your friends and family!







## Activity 3 Dry leaf ghosts

#### What you need:

- one (or more) dry leaf per child - use the big ones like oak, linden tree, or horse chestnut
- white and black paint
- paintbrush

#### What you do

- 1. Paint the leaf white but be careful: dry leaves are fragile!
- 2. Use the black paint to draw the eyes and mouth of your ghost.
- 3. Stick your autumn ghost onto the wall!

## Activity 4 Little chestnut animals

Teacher tip: here we have given instructions for making a rabbit and a pig, but the teacher and children can adapt our instructions for many other animals.

#### What you do

- 1. On the white cardboard, draw two long rabbit ears and cut them out.
- 2. Fold the bottom part of the ears and glue them onto one of your chestnuts.
- 3. Use the black felt-tip pen to draw the eyes and mouth of the rabbit.
- 4. On the pink cardboard, draw and cut out two short pig ears and a small pig nose.
- 5. Use the pencil to draw the nostrils onto the pig's nose.
- 6. Fold the bottom part of the ears and glue them onto the other chestnut. Glue the pig's nose onto the chestnut.
- 7. Use the black felt-tip pen to draw the pig's eyes.
- 8. Enjoy playing with your new chestnut animals!

#### What you need:

pencil

- two clean chestnuts per child
- scissors • white and pink cardboard
  - glue
  - black felt-tip pen







## YLE - Starters Test Certificazione Internazionale

Preparing children for the Cambridge STARTERS Test



Every year more and more children in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Primary school take the **Cambridge ESOL Young Learners STARTERS test.** This test gives an independent assessment of the children's knowledge of the English language.

The **Starters Test** is divided into three sections: the Listening Test, the Reading and Writing Test and the Speaking Test.

Although it is not necessary to teach extra vocabulary to children who want to take this test, it is very important that the children have practice in the type of questions they will have to answer. The children may not have experienced the mechanics of some of the exercises included in the test.

All the children who take this test receive a certificate showing how well they have done in the test.

### For the children

Young Learners English – Starters is a new collection of five full Starters Tests. This brand new Student's Book gives the children the opportunity to become familiar with all the different types of exercise they will have to perform when they take the Test. The Student's Book also includes a Multi-ROM with all the Listening test recordings as well as a video showing a child taking the Speaking test, so that the children can understand firsthand what is required of them.

#### For the teacher

**Young Learners English – Starters** Student's Book is accompanied by a Teacher's Guide that includes not only the tapescripts and answers but also numerous teaching ideas for development of the materials.







Gabriella Ballarin and Morena Martignon

On the seashore of endless worlds children meet. The infinite sky is motionless overhead and the restless water is boisterous. On the seashore of endless worlds the children meet with shouts and dances.

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They build their houses with sand and they play with empty shells. With withered leaves they weave their boats and smilingly float them on the vast deep. Children have their play on the seashore of worlds.

On the seashore of endless worlds children meet. Tempest roams in the pathless sky, ships get wrecked in the trackless water, death is abroad and children play. On the seashore of endless worlds is the great meeting of children.



Rabindranath Tagore

Children develop their relationships through play and express themselves through being part of a group. They are spontaneous and enthusiastic and don't worry about diversity. All children carry a magic universe inside themselves where everything is possible and where it is possible to build relationships with the other people they like to share time with and have fun with.



To become adults, children need to experience how to live in a group. Through doing this they develop a positive self-image and at the same time, they can develop the capacity to lay themselves open to others and the desire to know other people.

Having multi-ethnic classes at school provides a wonderful opportunity for all children to start on a journey through the cultural diversity that comes from other countries in the world. It opens more than one window onto cultures that are different from their own and they can experience different ways of being children. In the end, they will probably also discover that any differences are not so big and not so important.

The following are suggestions that the teacher can use as classroom activities or as class projects, in the perspective of the acquisition of competences, as suggested by the *Indicazioni Ministeriali per la Scuola del 1° ciclo*.





### Fairy tales

Preconceptions and prejudices are often the result of simply not knowing other people. One way of becoming more familiar with 'other worlds' is through the simple but magic language used in fairy tales. Fairy tales can capture children's imagination and interest, and lead them to the discovery of new things, different traditions and customs that belong to the cultures of the main characters.

There exist a number of published versions of fairy tales from around the world with the text in the original language alongside an Italian translation. This could be an opportunity to invite a parent to the school to read the story in his or her mother tongue! Or else, the stories can be read in English and explained alongside the background of the country of origin, its traditions and its history.

#### Games

There exist many games which are common to different cultures. They may have slightly different rules and names but are essentially the same. For example, the game known as *Hopscotch* in Britain is known as *El mundo* in Peru, *La Pelegrina* in El Salvador, *Carre* in Tunisia and *Ula*, meaning 'world', in Egypt.

An idea for the classroom could be to list games from around the world that have different names but are essentially the same and collect the various different rules and ways of playing the game. The children could then try to play the game in its different forms.



Gabriella Ballarin is a primary school teacher in Mogliano Veneto (TV). She has worked as a teacher trainer at primary level. Morena Martignon is a primary school teacher in Mogliano



#### Festivities

Another fun idea could be to find out about different festivities in different countries and then see if they correspond to those in Italy. Are there the same holidays? Do they come at the same time of the year? What are the traditions and the food that people eat during these festivities? What decorations are used? A small booklet and/ or a poster could be prepared by a group or different groups of children with pictures, drawings, descriptions and recipes.

#### Food

What better way is there of bringing someone into contact with the culture of another country than by tempting them with exotic food? There are countless recipes which can give us the flavour of another country. The children could be asked to collect these recipes and make a recipe book from around the world. Then the young cooks could try to prepare some multi-ethnic dishes at home and involve the whole family! Multi-ethnic classes are a wonderful inspiration for this kind of activities as different families cook different food (or the same food in different ways) and children can then compare their own experiences.

With older elementary children (and if the teacher thinks that it is appropriate with their classes) this could also be a very good way of getting children to learn about foods and drinks that are not permitted in certain cultures and religions.

### **Finally**

The end of year school party could have multiculturalism as its theme.

The children could sing songs in different languages and play outside the games they have discovered that come from different parts of the world. Then everyone could enjoy together the taste of ethnic food!

Let's enjoy being different... it is diversity that makes life so much more interesting!

Veneto (TV). She has been teaching English since 2001. They are co-authors of CLIL materials published on the Pearson-Longman website.





# New year, old English; the importance of revision tests

PrimaryTimes

Sarah Gudgeon

It's back to school again and although you hope that your students followed their study plans during the summer holidays and did regular homework, you can't be 100% sure. And if they did study, you can't be sure exactly how much real consolidation took place, or whether they just skimmed through their work while eating ice-cream on the beach!

Doing revision tests means that all the students start the school year on an equal footing as it gives you a

chance to identify any gaps in their learning and fill them in. At the end of this article you will find some examples of the kinds of activities that you can include in your tests. They can be adapted for use with the different classes.

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Obviously, some students will do better than others; but knowing who the stronger and weaker students are will help you with classroom management; you can always try to put a less confident student with a more confident one for pair work so that a task is completed successfully, or ask a stronger student to provide a model answer.

The results of the revision tests will also give you the

opportunity to reflect on your approach to teaching English and the methodology that you use. If your pupils do well in one particular area, then you know that the learning strategies you used were the right ones for your class. If, on the other hand, there is a topic or grammar point they are struggling with, then you may need to go back and think how you could have taught it differently.

Being more aware of what works well will help you with your lesson planning. There are lots of resources available... the key is to use them effectively. If your



class are not as fluent as you would like them to be, then you need to incorporate more speaking activities into the lessons, making sure that the children are given a good clear example of what is expected from them first. This would be the perfect time to choose two of your stronger students to get up in front of the class and do a role play, for example. Something like *Chatter Chums* in the *English Roundabout* series is ideal as children are given all the information and prompts they need. If the students can't remember much of the vocabulary

> you taught them last year, then think about how you presented it to them. For example, did you use flashcards, props or other realia? On average, students need to come into contact with a word from between five to sixteen times before they remember it (Nation, P. 1990. 'Teaching and Learning Vocabulary'. Massachusetts: Newbury House).

As for the grammar, be careful not to just drill it but to give the children the chance to actively use it. There are lots of ways of doing this but have you ever thought about using a play in your English lessons? By using a play such as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, for example, you will

be recycling and consolidating language and vocabulary with your students and they will really enjoy doing something a bit different. They could even perform the play at the end of the year for their families and this would give them a huge sense of achievement. Have a look at *Theatreworld*, our book of adapted plays, for some ideas.

Sarah Gudgeon teaches both children and adults in a private language school in Milan. She is co-author of On Holiday with Geronimo Stilton, English Roundabout and Primary Teaching Files 1, 2, 3 and 4, 5 LANG-Pearson Longman.





# **Vocabulary revision activities**

### <u>Start of Year 2</u>

Complete the words.

c\_n\_ry c\_t g\_ldf\_sh d\_g h\_mst\_r parrot

**Teacher's Notes:** The vocabulary train can be used for any class. For older children just give them the word in the first carriage and then they can fill up the carriages with related words. You can also put the children in groups and ask them to draw more trains. You can then put a picture of a big train station on your classroom wall and the children can stick on their trains.

### <u>Start of Year 3</u>











# **Vocabulary revision activities**

#### Start of Year 4



**Teacher's Notes:** If some children can remember the words that go in the crossword but aren't sure of the spelling, ask if anyone in the class knows how to spell it. If not, help them out but make sure they're using the phrase *How do you spell...?* As an extension activity children can create their own crosswords that they can then swap with a partner to complete. Monitor carefully to check the spellings and the number of letters in the crossword.

### <u>Start of Year 5</u>

• Write.



**Teacher's Notes:** The children have to look at the picture on their game card and write the corresponding word. They can use them to play 'snap' in pairs with the only rule being that they have to shout out the word (i.e. flute) in English. You can make more game cards and build up a class set. As well as playing snap with them you can use the cards as flashcards too.



## WORKSHEET

# **Grammar revision activities**

#### Start of Year 2









# **Grammar revision activities**

#### Start of Year 4

• Colour the right words.



**Teacher's Notes:** The children have to colour the right word in italics. They can then practise the dialogue with a partner.

Hi / Goodbye Jane.

Hi Lucy!

Those / This is my cousin.

What's his / her name?

Her name *is / are* Sophie. She *like / likes* football.

Great! I love / loves football, too. Let's play together soon.

### **Start of Year 5** Teacher's Notes: Once the children have got the conversation in the right order they can role play Put the sentences in the right order the situation. To give them more to make a conversation. Number. practice you can change the names, countries and item to be bought. Come on! Let's go! It's in the north of England. What's your name? Karen. I'm from Canada. Where is Leeds? Where are you from? Where can I buy I'm from Leeds. a postcard? Hi! My name's Annabel. At the newsagents next to the bank.

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# **CLASS PROJECT**

PROJECTS FOR CLASS AND TEACHER

# We all have good qualities!

The Class Project in this issue of Pearson Primary Times is related to *Educazione all'affettività*. It can be done as class work, i.e. each child submits a piece of work as a personal project. Alternatively, if the teacher has a large number of children in the class or feels that the pupils are too young to profitably work as a whole class, they can be divided into small groups, being careful that all groups have different children in them.

The children will be asked to play a game in which they have to point out their classmates qualities. The aim of the game is to teach kids that we all have good qualities and to strengthen their self-esteem.

To begin with, teachers should elicit the qualities that their pupils consider to be the best. This can be done in A1 first and then the teacher can help remind or teach the children what the words are in English. They could be qualities such as kindness, friendliness, intelligence, smartness, sense of humour etc. Older children can be asked to discuss whether they agree or not with each other's choices. Younger children can simply be quided by the teacher in their choice of words. Children will then be asked to list all these qualities onto a poster. They will then have to link each of their classmates to at least one of these qualities. Older children can be asked to write a short sentence explaining why they have linked a particular classmate to that quality or give an example of the classmate's quality.

Lisa is very kind: she always helps with my homework. Mohamed is very clever: he always has very good marks in Maths.

If the children are working in small groups, they can still link all the children in their class to the qualities they have listed. If the Project is delivered as a personal one, the children should use normal A4 sheets of paper instead of posters.

Once the Project is introduced to the class, dedicate a small amount of time each week to the discussion and preparation of the materials.

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All the written language must be in English and physically written by the children. Teachers are asked not to correct or re-write the sentences produced by the children. The first 120 children who take part in this project will receive a small present as a token of our appreciation for the time and effort taken in the preparation of the materials. Send the project material together with three copies of the completed project form to:

#### Pearson Primary Times, Class Projects - Issue 45 Pearson Italia S.p.A. - Via Archimede, 51 - 20129 Milano

The material should arrive in our offices by 15<sup>th</sup> December 2013. We may publish extracts from some of the projects in future issues of Pearson Primary Times. All the materials submitted become property of Pearson Italia S.p.A. and reproduction rights are reserved.

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND INSE	TED IN THREE COPIES INTO THE PACK OF THE PROJECT MATERIALS. 45		
Name of school			
	CAP		
City			
E-mail	@		
Name and surname of teacher			
Class/es presenting materials			
Number of children presenting mater	ials		
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